

FIGHT REDUNDANCIES
AND
WAGE CUTS

THE TRADES COUNCIL campaign on unemployment comes at a time when the plight of the unemployed is at a height. Thousands are now existing on the minimum dole payments; others see their benefits slipping as their pay-related money runs out; thousands of school-leavers are coming on to the over-crowded labour market. And still the redundancies continue. Another 365 announced at Gouldings yesterday. The Trades Council campaign is welcome and necessary.

The trade union leaders have convinced their members that the economic crisis could be beaten if we just "tightened our belts a little more", and "did our bit for the country". The result has been the encouragement of wage cuts through National Wage Agreements; no resistance to redundancies and productivity deals; little more than hot air on equal pay - and still the call is for more belt-tightening.

If the campaign is to be successful it will mean a complete break with the idea that we're "all in it together". The unions must fight independently - challenging every redundancy and refusing to put any limit to the wage demands needed to combat rising prices.

Any attempt to pass the buck to workers in other countries (import controls) or placing hope in a natural resources bonanza at some time in the future is to abandon the independence of the unions - to arrive at a compromise with the government and bosses - the strategy which has left us open to the assault of the past two years.

As for any reliance on "state industry" as the solution to the failure of private capitalism - public capitalism is no answer. Ask a CIE bus conductor about the pleasure of working for the state - and the great pay. Ask workers turfed out of ESB on redundancy pay about the blissful security of state control. State control of jobs is no answer while the bosses control the state.

After six years of National Wage Agreements the trade unions have been so weakened that there will be a lack of confidence in many militants - above all lack of confidence in the fighting ability of the rank and file. But it is that fighting ability - and only that - on which we can base a fight back.

It means taking up the best and sharpest demand of the Trades Council campaign: "Fight redundancies and wage cuts", and not let the campaign become a matter of a couple of marches and calls on the government to salve our consciences.

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Read
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A FIGHTING PROGRAMME ON REDUNDANCIES AND UNEMPLOYMENT

- + Fight all redundancies
- + No bans on recruitment
- + Fight for a 35 hour week to create jobs : Longer holidays
- + A ban on overtime to create jobs
- + No productivity deals or rationalisation that lead to job losses
- + Replacement of all who leave through "natural wastage".
- + End to double jobbing
- + No trade-off of wage cuts for the promise of future employment

These are demands that can be taken up by workers themselves in their workplaces and union branches.